

**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CONTINUED SESSION
MAY 20, 2013
MINUTES**

Chairman Corbin reconvened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the Highlands Civic Center as recessed from the May 14, 2013 regular meeting. All board members, the County Manager, Deputy Clerk, Finance Director and County Attorney were present. Also present were members of the news media and interested citizens.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Chairman Corbin welcomed those in attendance and pointed out that, as this was the first board of commissioners meeting to be held in Highlands in recent memory, he would like to see the board “do this more often.” He then recognized Commissioner Tate, who represents Highlands as the District I commissioner, and Commissioner Tate in turn introduced the other commissioners and county staff. Chairman Corbin extended birthday wishes to Commissioner Haven, who turned 55 on this date. Commissioner Beale noted that he and other commissioners would be traveling to Raleigh later in the week for County Assembly Day at the state General Assembly.

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Chairman Corbin asked those in attendance to observe a moment of silence.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG: Led by Commissioner Tate, the pledge to the flag was recited.

PUBLIC COMMENT: **Bob Womsley** asked the commissioners to consider working with the Town of Highlands to extend municipal water service along NC 28 beyond the U.S. Forest Service land in order to help provide additional fire protection for residents in that area. He suggested that the county and town boards make a joint request for grant funds for

the project. **Jeff Weller**, a member of the county's recreation commission and the varsity girls soccer coach at Highlands School, told the board he supported the acquisition of property to expand Zachary Park. **Tim Moseley** also voiced his support for a "full" soccer field near the park, saying it was a disservice to the children who played there and that they have "no home-field advantage" here. **Tay Bronaugh** also spoke to the need for the soccer field, telling the board he carries soccer goals around in his truck, and that the players use the baseball field without lines and are "trying to squeeze in where we can." **Highlands Mayor David Wilkes** extended a formal welcome to the commissioners, and spoke to the "better working relationship" between the two entities and the need to depend on each other to solve problems. Commissioner Tate read a letter on behalf of **Gary Ammons**, a part-time county Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), who asked that part-time EMTs be paid at the same hourly rate as full-time personnel.

ADJUSTMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as adjusted, as follows:

- To discuss the next step(s) related to the proposed public swimming area at Nantahala Lake under Old Business as Item 9A, per Commissioner Higdon.
- To consider a utility audit under Old Business as Item 9B, per Commissioner Higdon.
- To remove Item 10F – Consideration of declaring ambulance as surplus and donating the same to the Town of Highlands Police Department – from the agenda, per Commissioner Tate.
- To add discussion/consideration of a property exchange and property acquisition near Zachary Park under New Business as the new Item 10F, per Commissioner Tate.
- To have the opportunity to address next year's tax rate following the County Manager's presentation of the proposed budget, per Commissioner Haven.

PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2013-2014 BUDGET: The County Manager, who is also designated as the budget officer, pointed out that this was likely the first time that the budget has been presented in Highlands. After noting the locations where the budget would be available for public inspection, he delivered his budget message to the board, a copy of which is attached **(Attachment 1)** and is hereby made a part of these minutes. His presentation included current year highlights, highlights of the proposed budget, revenue projections, expenditures by function, fund balance available and appropriated, education as a county priority, county funding for current expense and

debt service for schools, a six-year history of school funding and challenges for the coming year. Overall, he noted that the budget was balanced as required by law with revenues and expenditures of \$46,643,716 with no increase in the tax rate of 27.9 cents per \$100 of valuation, and that it is submitted for the board's review and consideration. Chairman Corbin suggested that instead of starting discussion that the board members take time to review the document. The board agreed to hold budget work sessions on May 28th, May 30th, and June 4th, with each session starting at 5:30 p.m.

NANTAHALA LAKE SWIMMING AREA: Commissioner Higdon questioned if the board wanted to continue to pursue the idea of establishing a public swimming access point on Nantahala Lake, explaining that he had been contacted by Emory Crawford from the Nantahala Community and Mike Wilkins with the U.S. Forest Service. Chairman Corbin stated he was in favor of pursuing it. Commissioner Beale asked if Commissioner Higdon had contacted former commissioner Bob Koppers, who had worked for a long time on this project, and Commissioner Higdon responded that he had not. The County Manager said that Duke Energy must be involved as well. Following additional discussion, the board by consensus designated Commissioner Higdon and the County Attorney to meet with all of those involved in the project.

UTILITY AUDITS: Commissioner Higdon told the board that he had been in contact with Bill Bryson, who works for a company that audits utility bills in an effort to save money on energy costs, and who suggested that he could provide this service for the county's facilities. Following discussion, Chairman Corbin asked Commissioner Higdon to gather information and come back to the board with a recommendation.

PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE: County Planner Matt Mason presented the board with copies of the Macon County Subdivision Ordinance that included proposed revisions. He reviewed the proposed changes with the board, which include revisions to the technical review committee, the appeals process, bond requirements, plat requirements, changes to matters related to homeowners associations, minimum lot size requirements, road standards and grammatical changes. He said the revisions were recommended unanimously by the county planning board members. The County Attorney pointed out the need for a public hearing on the revised ordinance, and following discussion, the board agreed to hold the public hearing at its July regular meeting instead of June, and the County Attorney said he will prepare the proper notice. No action was taken.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A CEMETERY BOARD: The County Attorney handed out copies of a resolution that he had prepared for the board's consideration, explaining that the resolution would create a five-member board of trustees to oversee all abandoned public cemeteries in the county, and that the new board would be allowed to accept gifts and donations for the upkeep of those cemeteries. He told the board it would be best to establish the new board and appoint its members at a later date, and the chairman asked that the openings be advertised and that the board could consider them at its July meeting. Following discussion, and upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to adopt a "Resolution Concerning Abandoned Public Cemeteries and Establishment of Board of Trustees in Macon County Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 65-113." A copy of the resolution is attached (Attachment 2) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

BID FOR COMPUTER HARDWARE AT MACON COUNTY SCHOOLS: The Finance Director explained that the county had received bids for a total of 484 desktop computers for the school system, with the lowest of four bids coming from Tiber Creek Consulting at \$289,903.54. She recommended award of the bid to Tiber Creek Consulting, and further explained that the funds for this were part of the \$1.5-million that the board had allocated for the school system's information technology needs, about \$500,000 of which has already been spent. She noted that the computers are being ordered as they can be deployed. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to award the bid to Tiber Creek Consulting as presented. A copy of the bid tabulation is attached (Attachment 3) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

FUNDING FOR NO-RISE STUDY AT MACON COUNTY AIRPORT: The County Manager explained that the chairman of the Airport Authority had requested funding for a no-rise study in connection to an airplane hangar to be constructed at the airport. The authority was asking for \$12,000 to fund the study, with the money to be paid back to the county from Division of Aviation funds that the authority will receive by September of 2013. A copy of the letter from Macon County Airport Authority Chairman Miles Gregory is attached (Attachment 4) and is hereby made a part of these minutes. Commissioner Higdon asked for clarification about the county's relationship to the authority and the reason the study was needed. The County Manager said the study was required in order to keep the county from violating Federal Emergency Management Authority (FEMA) regulations. He said a private individual is willing to build the hangar, but the county must get the no-rise

certification. Following further discussion, and upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to fund an amount not to exceed \$12,000 for the study, with the County Attorney to draw up the proper interlocal agreement.

Chairman Corbin declared a recess at 9:03 p.m.

Chairman Corbin called the meeting back to order at 9:13 p.m.

SOUTHWESTERN COMMISSION REGIONAL VISIONING EFFORT:

Chairman Corbin offered some brief comments regarding a regional visioning effort for the seven westernmost counties of the state, including Macon, and told the board that Ryan Sherby, the Executive Director of the Southwestern Commission, would be available to attend a board meeting to discuss the effort in more detail. No action was taken.

PROPERTY EXCHANGE/PURCHASE NEAR ZACHARY PARK IN HIGHLANDS:

Commissioner Tate used maps to explain a proposed transaction that would involve the county swapping a 1.7-acre tract of land for a nearby 1.7-acre tract of land, and then purchasing a similar – sized parcel with the goal of providing a regulation-sized soccer field near Zachary Park in Highlands. This led to a discussion of the due diligence on the county’s part as it relates to buying the property as well as the procedure that must be followed for the exchange of real estate. The County Attorney said the board must publish notice of intent for the exchange and could then consider the matter at its June 11th meeting. This was followed by discussion of the use of the property and the possible need for some survey work. Commissioner Beale made a motion to advertise the proposed real estate exchange and to authorize the County Manager to have the necessary surveying performed so that a proper description of the property to be purchased could be considered, and Commissioner Tate seconded the motion. Commissioner Higdon stated that while he thought this was a great idea, he was not opposed to the swap but would not support the non-budgeted expense to purchase the additional property. The motion passed 3-2, with Commissioners Beale, Corbin and Tate in favor, and Commissioners Haven and Higdon opposing.

CONSENT AGENDA: Commissioner Higdon requested that Item 11D (Consideration of county management records retention and disposition schedule) as well as Budget Amendment #175 be removed from the consent agenda and discussed separately. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the remaining items on the consent agenda were unanimously approved: **Minutes –**

Approved the minutes from the April 9th, April 12th, April 18th and April 23rd meetings. **Budget amendments** – Approved the following budget amendments: #169 for the Sheriff's Office to appropriate \$10,015 from an insurance settlement for vehicle repairs and maintenance; #174 for the Sheriff's Office to appropriate \$1,168 in insurance settlements for vehicle repairs. (Revisions with corresponding numbers attached.) **Tax releases** – There were no tax releases for consideration. **Change to Macon County Public Health Fee Schedule** – Approved an increase in the cost for Zostavax (the shingles vaccine) from \$161 to \$171. **Pool hours/prices for Macon County Parks and Recreation** – Approved hours of operation for the pool and various prices for admission and other items such as lessons and parties, per Attachment 11F. **Monthly ad valorem tax collection report** – No action necessary.

BUDGET AMENDMENT #175: Commissioner Higdon questioned additional county funding for a study concerning widening of the runway at the Macon County Airport, and following an explanation and discussion, Commissioner Tate – the liaison to the Airport Authority – asked that the item be tabled until he could gather more information.

COUNTY MANAGEMENT RECORDS RETENTION AND DISPOSITION SCHEDULE: The County Manager explained that the state Division of Archives and Records had updated the regulations that govern how long certain public records must be kept and under what conditions they may be destroyed, and the county was asked to concur and abide by this updated schedule. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to approve the schedule as presented, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 5) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

APPOINTMENTS: Board of Health – Upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to appoint Sheila Price to the professional nurse position replacing Tammy Dills, Emily Porter-Bowers as a community member replacing Roberta Swank, and Teresa Murray as a community member replacing Ron Winecoff. Terms of appointment are for three years and will become effective July 1, 2013. Mrs. Dills, Mrs. Swank and Mr. Winecoff had all served three consecutive three-year terms and by statute could not be reappointed at this time. **Social Services Board** – Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to reappoint Jim Garner for another three-year term, effective July 1, 2013. **Planning Board** – Chairman Corbin asked the board to allow Karl Gillespie, the current board chair, to continue to serve through the June meeting and to table any action on this

appointment and allow a full 30-day advertisement of the post to appear on the county's website. The board members agreed without objection.

RECESS: With no other business, and upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously at 9:51 p.m. to recess the meeting until 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 28, 2013 in the commission boardroom located on the third floor of the Macon County Courthouse at 5 West Main Street, Franklin, NC.

Jack Horton, County Manager
Clerk to the Board

Kevin Corbin
Board Chairman